

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are before the Examiner. Applicants affirm their election of Group 1, claims 1-20. Claims 1-8 have been canceled.

Claims 1-5, 7-11, 13-17, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Akki et al. (US 6,020,034).

Claim 9 requires that the metal substrate be formable and that it have a pigmented layer at least partially disposed on it. A transparent ionomer layer must be at least partially disposed on the pigmented ionomer layer.

A "formable" metal substrate according to the definition on page 4 is "a material that is not shaped or formed, but is capable of being shaped or formed...." Akki neither discloses nor suggests applying an ionomer or any other layer to unformed articles or parts. Pre-formed "vehicles bodies" are specifically mentioned (col. 9, l. 48).

Akki also fails to teach or suggest a substrate with a layer of both pigmented and transparent ionomer. Akki refers to a "clear coat" in column 9, however, column 13, and examples 1-13 demonstrate that Akki's clear coat is not an ionomer.

Claims 6, 12, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akki et al. in view of Kordomenos et al. (US 4,491,641). It is applicant's understanding that Kordomenos is cited primarily for its teaching of unpolished metal substrate. It should be noted that Kordomenos specifically teaches applying its epoxy ester resin coating to an "unpolished metal surface of an automotive vehicle body", i.e., a preformed substrate. (Col. 3, lines 6 and 7). There is no disclosure within Kordomenos to suggest treatment of anything but preformed substrates, and there is no disclosure that would motivate one to use ionomers either pigmented or transparent, much less both.

For these reasons, Applicant submits that the pending claims are both novel and nonobvious and are in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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